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AUTHOR Cerri Negrini, Maria Ausilia
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ABSTRACT

The paper reports issues and outcomes of a seminar on intercultural education and migrant women organized by Italy as part of the Council of Europe's 1981 Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) Project No. 7. Sub-themes of the seminar were the migratory situation at the local level (departures and returns, particularly in the context of the situation of women), school and out-of-school experiments in the light of relations between school and family, and education in human rights and the situation of migrants. Work in the plenary session focused on migrant women and children as the "weak link" in the chain of emigration, the March 1984 Regional Act No. 10 covering returning emigrants, returning migrant women as a "mediating resource," intercultural education as a means to combat discrimination, features of intercultural education, and implementation of human rights education. Proposals of four working parties included formation of a permanent team of teachers, psychologists, and social workers in schools concerned with the reintegration of migrants; establishment of committees of mothers of returnee pupils to provide regular contacts with teachers; and cultural exchanges between European schools. Areas needing continued attention included educational assistance for interculturalism, involvement of returning women with other women, youth exchanges, and original language and culture maintenance. (NEC)

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"The education and cultural development of migrants"

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# INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND MIGRANT WOMEN

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COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION
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The CDCC's Project No. 7

«The education and cultural development of migrants»

# «Intercultural education and migrant women»

Seminar organised by Italy

Report prepared by

Mrs Maria Ausilia CERRI NEGRINI
Director of Educational Affairs, attached
to the Italian Consulate in Metz (France)

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Caserta, 29-31 October 1985

The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe

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CONTENTS

Page

I. Introduction:

The work of CDCC Project Group No. 7 ..... 3

II. Objectives and motivations of the Caserta seminar/workshop 4

III. Work in plenary session

1. Migrant women and children: the «weak link» ..... 5

2. A regional act covering returning emigrants ..... 5

3. Returning migrant women: a «mediating resource» ..... 6

4. Intercultural education as a means to combat discrimination ..... 6

5. Towards intercultural education ..... 7

6. Intercultural education and education in human rights 8

7. Proposals by the working parties

a. Working Party No. 1 ..... 10

b. Working Party No. 2 ..... 11

c. Working Party No. 3 ..... 11

d. Working Party No. 4 ..... 13

8. Conclusions ..... 14

9. Some final observations by the Rapporteur ..... 16

Appendix I: List of participants ..... 18

## I. INTRODUCTION

### THE WORK OF CDCC PROJECT GROUP NO. 7

Following Resolution No. 2 on «Migrant education» adopted in Stockholm in 1975 by the European Ministers of Education, in 1977 the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) of the Council of Europe implemented a programme on the training of teachers responsible for the education of migrant workers' children, which was at the origin of the reflexion on intercultural education.

A group of experts from various member states, representing countries of origin and host countries, selected significant teacher training experiments in several countries making use of intercultural criteria, and prepared information files on the culture, civilisation and educational system of countries of origin and host countries, for use in intercultural training.

The work done by this group led to the Recommendation on «the training of teachers in education for intercultural understanding, notably in a context of migration», adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 25 September 1984.

That recommendation invites all Council of Europe member states to include in initial and in-service training of all their teachers a theoretical and practical initiation in intercultural education.

The activities of the working party also led to the implementation, in 1981, of CDCC Project No. 7 on «the education and cultural development of migrants», which adopts the intercultural approach as its basic option. Regarding this, in his interim report of the group to the CDCC, Louis Porcher explains:

... «the basic option is for the intercultural approach, both as a principle and as an aim. The term 'intercultural', as understood here, is a result of four elements:

a. most of our societies have become multicultural, and will become increasingly so;

b. each culture has its own specific features, to be respected as such;

c. multiculturalism is a potential asset;

d. to make multiculturalism an asset in reality, we must achieve communication and interaction between all the cultures concerned, without obliterating the specific identity of any, and we must stimulate the multicultural situation to make it truly intercultural, with all the dynamism which this implies (in terms of communication and interaction especially).

In other words, interculturalism is not an end in itself. It is mainly a tool to be used in promoting equality of chances and an optimum integration into social and economic life.

In the field under review, the greatest danger lies in mere juxtaposition, and therefore isolation and mutual ignorance. Priority must therefore be given to links, connections, relations and borderline or contact areas. Three themes were therefore chosen:

a. links between the school and family institutions;

b. links between school culture and out-of-school culture;

c. links between child education and adult education.»

The group also organised three colloquies for further theoretical study on the basis of analyses made by the experts: «Migrant culture and culture of origin», «Migrant culture in a changing society: Multicultural Europe by the year 2000», and «Women and migration: cultural and educational aspects».

The following working methods were also adopted in the context of this project: case studies: studies of experiments carried out by external experts; visits by members of the group to places where noteworthy experiments were taking place; studies carried out by experts in various disciplines, responsible for further investigation of essential but still imprecise concepts, by means of research in host countries and countries of origin.

It was as part of this scheme that Italy organised the seminar which has just been held in Caserta on the theme «Intercultural education and migrant women».

## II. OBJECTIVES AND MOTIVATIONS OF THE CASERTA SEMINAR/WORKSHOP

Organised as part of CDCC Project No. 7, in co-operation with the Italian Ministry of Education and the Provveditorato agli studi (Provincial Education Office) in Caserta, the seminar was held in a «test region», Campania, in which the traditional migratory flow has now reached a «zero sum» (equilibrium between departures and returns).

The main theme, «Intercultural education and migrant women», was complemented by three sub-themes which guided the work of the groups and the debates in plenary session:

a. the migratory situation at local level: departures and returns, particularly in the context of the situation of women;

b. school and out-of-school experiments in the light of relations between school and family;

c. education in human rights and the situation of migrants.

The organisers' aim was twofold:

1. to give new momentum to research, whilst coming up with proposals for solutions to the problems emigration poses to the local community (particularly the «new» phenomenon of return);

2. to identify the role of women in the context of migration (social life, school, development), in a region where, because of the weight of cultural traditions, they occupy a manifestly subordinate position.

The work of the seminar took place as follows: the mornings were devoted to contributions by lecturers and to debates in plenary session, and the afternoons were set aside for group discussions. The proceedings were opened

on the morning of 29 October, with a statement by Mr Leopoldo Gagliardi, Provincial Director of Education for the province of Caserta, who chaired the first day's session. On the following days Mr Felice Condò, Head of Division at the Directorate General for Cultural Exchanges of the Ministry of Education, chaired the sessions.

I should like to stress that the work of the seminar took place in a cordial atmosphere, thanks to the warm welcome extended by the organisers as Caserta, and to the very real work put into preparation by highly dedicated teachers and educational administrators from the Campania region.

III. WORK IN PLENARY SESSION

1. Migrant women and children: «the weak link»

Consideration of the local situation of migration was introduced by a report by Mrs Anna Giordano, which documented the situation of migrant women and children during their stay in host countries, and particularly their situation on returning to the region of origin. Mrs Giordano's report was the result of a series of investigations and activities carried out by a working party which has spent five years studying the reintegration and the assimilation of returning children. According to the Rapporteur the two groups appear to experience particular difficulty on their return:

a. children and adolescents, who are especially penalised at school, where they are put in classes that do not equate to their age and academic level, mainly because of their unfamiliarity with the Italian language;

b. migrant women, most of whom are «civic semi-illiterates», destabilised on their return by their reintegration into a traditional cultural environment in which they fail to find certain factors conducive to independence they had known in the host countries (work, less subservience in relations with the husband, greater social autonomy).

The speeches which followed the presentation of Mrs Giordano's report also stressed the difficult situation of migrant women and children, the «weak link» in the chain of emigration.

Mr Leopoldo Gagliardi, Provincial Education Officer of Caserta, considered that in southern cultures there is a direct causal link between the situation of women and that of the young, at the emigration stage and also the return stage. These two groups are the most vulnerable to the risks of economic recession, of cultural deprivation and of underemployment. The responses of southern society to the relatively new phenomenon of massive return are naturally tentative: however, as both Mr Gagliardi and the Regional Co-ordinator for Employment and Emigration, Mr Nicola di Monaco, pointed out, the region of Campania has passed legislation to deal with the new problems.

2. A regional Act covering returning emigrants

Regional Act No. 10 of 1 March 1984, partly modelled on the EEC Directive of 25 July 1977, defines the framework provisions of regional intervention and sets up a regional council to deal with migration problems, responsible for defining, and if necessary correcting, the policies of the regional authorities of Campania in this field.

The new regional bodies are giving priority to closing the gulf that is detrimental to the situation of migrant women and children.

But, as Mr di Monaco said, although many problems affecting women must be confronted and solved in the general context of emigration, more often they are an aspect of the more specific issue of the role of women in Italian society.

3. Returning migrant women: a «mediating resource»

The phenomenon of emigration and immigration in Campania was considered in a wider context in Mr Antonio Perotti's report on «the situation of immigrant populations in Europe today. The role of women in the multi-cultural context of the host society».

According to the Rapporteur, the migratory phenomenon, particularly in the traditional emigration countries, is undergoing profound change, particularly as a result of the appearance of an influx of foreign immigration.

This trend, which is very pronounced in Italy (where there are thought to be more than 500,000 immigrants from the third world), is creating a new situation, calling for a fundamental revision of the economic, social, cultural and political significance of the migratory phenonemon in society.

In Mr Perotti's view, the new situation arising out of the co-existence of an influx of immigrants and the return of national emigrants, which is extremely pronounced in the south of Italy, is accentuating the tendency towards a multicultural society and giving women a new role as «a mediating resource» between the family and social realities, in particular, school.

The function of emigrant women returning to the country of origin is different to that of men, particularly in cultural matters.

The role of migrant women in the host country is to conserve the group identity, and guarantee transmission within the family of the language, traditions and customs of the country of origin; on the other hand, when they return, they assume the role of innovators in the social and cultural realities of the region of origin.

Migrant women often introduce intercultural elements into daily life: as Mrs Giordano points out, they decorate the home as they did abroad, open supermarkets, will not allow refuse and waste to accumulate on the front door-step. In this way, they can influence accepted conduct to a surprising extent.

4. Intercultural education as a means to combat discrimination

The situation of migrant women in host countries nonetheless remains extremely unfavourable. According to Mrs Carla Pesciatini, of the Santi Institute for Emigration, citing a report by the European Parliament, those migrant women who work are employed in the least skilled jobs (46-70% of them work, as compared to 18-30% for the indigenous population), and work for up to 48 hours a week (in some cases 60 or even 80 hours), at low wages.

According to Mrs Pesciatini, second-generation migrant women are often in the same situation, since their lack of qualifications (essentially due to the contradictions between the culture of origin and that of the host society, and to the need for an immediate income) excludes them from qualified jobs.

In the speaker's view, an intercultural approach, calling for intensive preparation of migrants, particularly migrant women, and provision of information to them (eg through the mass media) must be not only the ultimate objective, but also a means of reassessing their role and the opportunities available to them in the host society, and in the society of origin on their return.

5. Towards intercultural education

But the subordinate role of women must not conceal the fact that they are one of the pillars of both the family and the social community, in the opinion of Mrs Micheline Rey, and of the majority of the speakers. This is true in the countries of origin (the role of women is modified and diversified when the men leave to work in the industrialised countries). It is also true in the host countries. Although the question is little discussed, said Mrs Rey, it would seem that their capacity for adaptation, their mobility and their stamina have contributed substantially to these countries' economies. Furthermore, on their return, women take on an important role as innovators, as was clearly illustrated in Mr Antonio Perotti's report.

In the links between school, family and community the role of women can be of paramount importance, whether they be women of the indigenous population who have remained in the country, women who have returned after living abroad, or foreign women who have immigrated into the region.

But, Mrs Rey stressed, at this level too the issue must be seen in terms of interaction and solidarity, if one wishes to surmount the conflicts in relations with may arise: cultural divergences, prerogatives, jealousies, self-effacement, etc.

Intercultural education must be the key note to these various forms of integration in different circumstances; Micheline Rey has defined its main features as follows:

a. the intercultural approach is a reciprocal recognition of cultures and of their creative interactions, which are in a state of flux, and not static;

b. it implies a recognition of the value of cultures which, whilst it does not seek to deny the dominance of the host culture, also accords a place to migrant cultures;

c. intercultural education is a principle which underlies all school activities;

d. it calls for a reassessment of socio- and ethnocentric criteria for evaluation, a re-examination of standards;

e. it calls for every aspect of the organisation of schools, and of school life, to be placed in an intercultural perspective;

f. school must thus be a place where pupils can coexist in solidarity and mutual acceptance;

g. the presence of mother tongues in the school has an important symbolic role;

h. it is indispensable that learning should take account of a number of viewpoints, paying particular attention to different cultural and religious values;

i. art is a particularly appropriate medium for appreciating different cultures;

j. pupils' intercultural approach depends on the quality of co-operation within the educational teams and between indigenous and foreign teachers;

k. communication between the school, families and the social environment in which the children and the whole community - migrant and indigenous - live, is a prerequisite to learning;

l. intercultural education is an approach which involves countries of origin and host countries alike, and which calls for solidarity between countries with different resources;

m. education in intercultural understanding hinges on teacher training;

n. teachers must attach the highest importance to transcending and interpreting intercultural conflicts.

6. Intercultural education and education in human rights

Mr Paolo Dalessandro, Central Inspector at the Ministry of Education, said that an important contribution to the implementation of the intercultural approach must also be made by education in human rights in schools, at all levels, in order to foster tolerance and respect for diversity, in the spirit inculcated by those responsible for drawing up the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Rapporteur referred particularly to the recommendation on this subject adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 14 May 1985, Recommendation R (85) 7, which affirms in particular:

«1.1 The understanding and experience of human rights is an important element of the preparation of all young people for life in a democratic and pluralistic society. It is part of social and political education, and it involves intercultural and international understanding.

1.2 Concepts associated with human rights can, and should, be acquired from an early stage. For example, the non-violent resolution of conflict and respect for other people can already be experienced within the life of a pre-school or primary class.

1.3 Opportunities to introduce young people to more abstract notions of human rights, such as those involving an understanding of philosophical, political and legal concepts, will occur in the secondary school, in particular in such subjects as history, geography, social studies, moral and religious education, language and literature, current affairs and economics.

1.4 Human rights inevitably involve the domain of politics. Teaching about human rights should, therefore, always have international agreements and covenants as a point of reference, and teachers should take care to avoid imposing their personal convictions on their pupils and involving them in ideological struggles.»

Education in human rights, Mr Dalessandro considered, already figures on the curriculum in Italian schools, and is destined to be developed substantially in the future, in view of the tendency to give a «social dimension» to the schools of tomorrow. Discussion on human rights, the speaker said, goes hand in hand with discussion on immigrants, as the recommendation of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers rightly stressed.

An important contribution to increasing awareness of human rights, particularly in the context of migrants, can come, in the specific case of Italy, from the Italian cultural institutes abroad, as was stressed by Mr Giuseppe Cerri, Director of the Institute in Strasbourg, a town symbolic in this respect. These institutes, the speaker said, might also usefully contribute to exchanges among young people, or to organising school visits among the different countries, particularly between emigration countries and immigration countries. In this way they would contribute to giving tangible form to the intercultural approach.

7. Proposals by the working parties

The four working parties set up at the Caserta seminar/workshop were invited to propose replies to the following questions put by Mr A Perotti:

a. How far it is possible to take account, in curricula and daily educational practice, of the linguistic and cultural experience of migrant children returning to the country?

b. In your country, has there been an attempt to establish contacts and create links between the various levels of school (pre-school, primary and secondary) with a view to making all those involved equally responsible for the scholastic success of pupils returning to the country?

c. What is your experience regarding contact and interaction between various areas of interculturation and acculturation of children returning to the country (family, social environment, school environment)?

In relations with the family, what problems seem the most urgent and most frequently encountered?

d. What proposals do you wish to make regarding establishment of co-ordination at the level of the school or of the department responsible for educational and teaching questions, at provincial or regional level, in order to select various problems, particularly scholastic and educational problems, concerning return, international exchanges, and increasing the local community's receptiveness to other cultures?

e. What type of initiatives or what strategies do you propose in order to make effective use of returning women migrants as «resources» or «intermediaries» or «mediators» between the family, school and other social realities, both cultural and economic, existing in the territory (programmes for training or education in human rights, extra-community relations, extra-curricular or school-related activities, linguistic or cultural activities in nursery or primary classes)?

The four working parties drafted the following documents:

A. Working Party No. 1

Rapporteur: Mr Pasquale Rienzo (A S Mazzocchi Secondary School, S. Maria Capua Vetere)

Before turning to the study of the plan of work, the group proposes to define the concept of interculturalism as the interaction of several cultures intended to develop an overall educational project as part of a supra-national policy, an interaction which unfortunately is as yet far from being achieved. The construction of such a project involved various stages:

a. acceptance of oneself and of others;

b. a knowledge of personal experience and linguistic and cultural achievements of migrants.

Interculturalism must be considered in its anthropological sense, as the exploitation of all varieties of culture: cultural relativism induces respect for all cultures and modifies conceptions and criteria for evaluation.

Given what precedes, the teaching profession should be informed of the importance of the need for social and intercultural education.

We must re-evaluate and institutionalise encounters between teachers in secondary schools and those in the final year of primary education, which at present take place only occasionally. Likewise, the role of co-ordination and promotion which is the responsibility of the school, as the most suitable place for people to come together to solve the problem of returning migrants, presupposes increased interaction between the school and local authorities.

As specific measures, the group proposes:

1. The formation of a permanent team, composed of teachers, psychologists, social workers and others in schools concerned with the reintegration of migrants. When necessary, provision must be made for teaching in the foreign language.

2. Concerted programming with the local authorities and different cultural associations, meetings and seminars enabling the phenomenon of the return of migrants to be analysed and studied not only from the pedagogic and educational point of view, but also in its economic and social aspects. During these encounters attempts should be made to give returning emigrant women an active role as mediators between the family and school, and between the family and society, in the light of their cultural acquisitions and their personal experience, and also by entrusting them with the organisation of extra-curricular and out-of-school activities.

3. In upper secondary schools young returning migrants should also be able to take on a role as protagonists through the intercultural «input» that can be given by motivated and well-prepared teachers.

Lastly, it would be desirable to give the widest possible publicity to the colloquies held on this question.

B. Working Party No. 2

Rapporteur: Mr Mario Cerreta (Leonardo da Vinci Secondary School - Avellino)

1. There appears to be a need to analyse and evaluate the capacities, skills and expressive resources of migrant pupils. The educational objectives of the expressive activities must be determined, particularly through the language in conjunction with artistic, technical, musical and physical education, on the basis of experiences learned abroad.

The next task must be to choose the most appropriate and effective teaching methods such as interdisciplinarity, teaching units, educational structuralism etc, and the definition of operational models: guided and spontaneous work, individual and group work, objective tests of pupils' level (for information); dialogues, questionnaires, reports, descriptions, lectures etc (for research); free, spontaneous, abstract and figurative activities, the use of expressive means (for production).

2. No attempt has ever been made to create links between different levels of schooling in order to make the whole school system aware of the integration and assimilation of migrant pupils, at least not at regional level.

3. In the CDCC, it is essential to make articulate and co-ordinated proposals with a view to integrating disciplines, particularly those connected with expression, provided for in the curriculum in each member state.

4. It seems desirable that returning migrant women should take on a role as mediators in the school environment in order to throw light on the behaviour of their children and contribute to the choice of teaching methods and tools.

Consequently, we propose that a committee of mothers of returnee pupils should be set up in schools with the task of establishing periodic and regular contacts with teachers.

Returning women migrants have acquired a very rich experience and their personality has been developed by sacrifice: they should be fully involved in the life of the community that welcomes them (in the collegiate organs of the school, in administrative and political life, in economic, productive, creative, social and religious activities etc), so that the best use can be made of what they have to offer interculturally, contributing to growing unity among peoples and progress in society.

C. Working Party No. 3

Rapporteur: Matilde Consales - Baia Latina Secondary School

1. All children returning to their home country after a more or less protracted stay abroad, encounter difficulties in integration. They find themselves in schools whose curriculum and organisation are differently structured, among comrades who have already forged links of friendship and solidarity among themselves, with whom they are unable to communicate.

These difficulties are less serious at the compulsory schooling stage, during which they have more time to get used to speaking Italian, which they have learned only through the parents' dialect, to understand the teachers' educational and classroom language, establish friendly relations with their comrades, to get to know others, and themselves become known.

Teachers must do their best to get to know these children well, to help them to surmount the obstacles preventing them from giving of their best, and come to terms with their migrant history, and the positive and negative experiences they have accumulated during their early years.

In secondary schools, moreover, it is desirable to put immigrant children into classes studying the foreign language they know, to enable them to feel they have earned recognition and allow them to express themselves unself-consciously and with mastery of the language. In this way they will not feel excluded and will gradually overcome all barriers, begin to find their feet, and will be able to become integrated in the class. Immigrant pupils must be allowed to develop in every possible way, by being allowed to express themselves through manual, practical, creative, artistic and sporting activities etc, in which they will be able to show their worth without being handicapped by language difficulties. In this way, interculturalism can be practised in schools, which will enrich the whole community.

2. It must be emphasised that in Italy, although theoretically the conditions exist for a link between the various levels of education, in practice very little is done to establish an effective and concrete rapport between nursery, elementary and secondary schools.

This situation, too, has negative effects on immigrant pupils, since teachers in secondary schools are often unaware of their pupils' previous history.

3. The group discussion on experiences connected with integration of emigrants into the «return environment» revealed that in small centres the problem is not serious: contact between individuals in the social and school communities is encouraged by the more restricted environment and by the bonds of kinship and friendship that link families.

On the other hand, the situation is more problematical in large centres because in these the immigrant often feels isolated, rejected, misunderstood and abandoned.

The group is not aware of any initiatives taken to assist migrants in becoming fully reintegrated in the community of origin.

4. To overcome the difficulties referred to in the preceding paragraphs, the working party proposes:

a. cultural exchanges between schools in EEC countries, to encourage young people to get to know one another better;

b. school trips abroad, particularly in countries that receive large groups of emigrants, in order to learn their habits, customs, way of life, and social and economic systems;

c. promotion by all possible means of circulation among emigrants of regional acts incorporating economic or cultural measures to facilitate their return;

d. appropriate legislation to encourage creation of cultural and social centres (circles, associations, libraries, sports centres) where different cultures may meet and mingle.

5. The working party recognises the role of women as cultural mediators, for, as mothers, wives or workers, they are present in all sectors of society, absorbing its vital humours and contributing new values.

At the same time they remain the custodians of traditional values and of their natural culture.

D. Working Party No. 4

Rapporteur: Mrs Marisa Di Rienzo - Caserta

1. In order to exploit the experiences of children returning to the country the group considers it important to:

a. offer them emotional security;

b. involve them actively in their schoolwork;

c. involve the other pupils in collaborative activities, so that children returning to the country may be accepted, and make their own contributions;

d. examine their school curriculum but also their life in general, involving the family by participation in the work of the collegiate organs;

e. develop the scientific curriculum in which it is easier to forge a common language and achieve the same objectives;

f. as regards language, make dialectal forms and all expressions from the milieu of origin equally acceptable by organising associative and comparative exercises;

g. in other disciplines such as history, carry out research to provide different keys to interpretation, resulting in a sense of relativism, rejection of all forms of arbitrary interpretation, the ability to read events critically;

h. refer to current personalities and events brought to everyone's attention by the mass media (eg Governor Geraldine Ferraro, Governor Mario Cuomo, Italian-American celebrities);

i. make access to a number of cultures a matter for pride, help pupils to feel enriched by what, through psychological and educational errors, might be regarded as an obstacle or a disadvantage;

l. compare the two cultures (indigenous and migrant) to enhance awareness of the stereotyped judgements that distort facts and make it difficult to bring people from different communities closer together;

m. use material provided by families, associations etc to give a better understanding of the characteristics of the places of origin.

2. Direct contact between the teachers in different schools is necessary, as is intervention by the academic district, as a liaison body between the various schools in a region.

3. Families must be involved in school life without placing undue emphasis on integration of returning migrant children, and particular cases must be monitored carefully (handicapped children, exceptionally gifted children, children who have returned without their parents etc).

However, the functioning of schools as promoters of culture in general is hindered by a number of negative factors, such as:

- the presence in certain areas of Campania of members of the Camorra (1), partisan in spirit, destructive and divisive;
- the malfunctioning of administrations;
- the scant interest taken in schools by certain responsible agencies;
- the selfishness of many parents; and, lastly,
- the absence of public initiatives or of any efforts at promotion of human and civic values.

4. The group proposes open classes, «full-time» schools, social activities, and «back-up» teachers.

It requests that, at the level of the district, of the Provincial Education Office (Provveditorato), of the commune, the province and the region, a bureau should be set up, responsible for more detailed study of questions relating to migrant children returning to the country, the search for suitable educational material, etc.

5. The group proposes that meetings should be organised between mothers of returning children and their teachers and head teachers. It also proposes using foreign women married to Italians to increase awareness within the school community. It would be useful to promote interviews of pupils by returning and foreign women; these women might also be associated more clearly with school life (organisation of school fairs, loans of material, etc).

8. Conclusions

The following comments and proposals have been extracted from the joint discussions, the work by the groups, and the main reports presented at the seminar:

1. The role of women in an intercultural project based on the cultural pluralism created in a region by the return of emigrant families (after a long period spent abroad) and by the arrival of other groups of foreign immigrants, must form part of an overall framework which transcends the changes directly resulting from the migratory phenomenon. This role must take account of other profound changes resulting from technological advances, especially in the sphere of information, documentation and employment.

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(1) The Camorra is an association of criminals which flourishes in the Naples region.

2. Women are particularly sensitive to innovation and modernisation; they are particularly susceptible to influence in the world of the home, in which they play a special role, and which is certainly the area undergoing the greatest transformations.

3. The return of migrant women to their country of origin, whatever its cause (unemployment, difficulty in finding employment, racist attitudes among the indigenous population, financial incentives to return, etc) leads to problems in a number of areas - economic (the search for work), social (housing, health structures), educational (school and vocational training structures), and also psychological and cultural (readjustment, conflicts resulting from behaviour and values acquired abroad). In the cultural sphere, women, after the experience of emigration, are particularly conscious of the problems of educating children and may play a dynamic role in the search for new identities for themselves and their children.

4. These considerations point to a need to make better use of migrant women returning to their country of origin, as instigators of social and cultural change. Women may play this role at several levels:

- by participating in initiatives designed to enhance relationships between family and school (as «agents of contact» with the school);
- by promoting new roles in community life («community assistants»);
- in adult participation in educational and training activiites;
- in extra-curricular activities and linguistic and cultural activities at pre-school and school level.

5. Women who have experienced acculturation in specific circumstances (ie when uprooted or separated as a result of immigration) or whose original enculturation took place abroad, do not have an opportunity to express the richness of their social and cultural experience, on account of the very limited opportunities women have of coming into contact with the social and cultural environment. It is for the institutions and agents operating in that environment to change and improve these circumstances, thereby bringing about exchange, contact and interaction.

6. In order to be effective, action to influence the social and cultural environment of a specific territory must be taken by all those involved in the educational community, without exception. Essentially, this is a social and institutional environment affected by deviant social phenomena which condition the activity of institutions, groups and individuals.

7. The schools must play a major role in exploiting the cultural and social experience of migrant women returning to the country, by associating them with educational and school projects.

Although the task of the schools is to transmit knowledge which will enable children to master the technological civilisation of the society in which they will live and establish their lifestyles, these schools cannot dissociate themselves from other fields of knowledge, communicated by families and by the indigenous or foreign communities living in the territory. Indeed, any educational project must be conceived specifically to take account of this pluralism of knowledge experienced by children in the class.

8. This can only be achieved through co-ordination among the schools, provinces, regions and various agents concerned. This presupposes:

a. the existence of a minimum network of «personnel resources», who, at different levels, are responsible for monitoring the development of the current situation (knowledge of the quantitative and qualitative aspects of problems) and for designing projects in consultation with institutions, and proposing appropriate strategies for intervention;

b. collection of all data useful for adequate knowledge of the scholastic and educational situation of children of emigrant families returning to the country;

c. stimulation of educational projects concerning the various agents of the educational community which, on the basis of the present situation, seek the various strategies needed for a coherent solution to the problems;

d. provision of educational resources and circulation of information about pilot schemes in this field.

9. Some final observations by the Rapporteur

In concluding this summary report I should like to indicate some areas for reflection, observations or concrete proposals, inspired by the formal and informal meetings that took place in Caserta.

a. Interculturalism, in a region which, like so many others in our continent, has been opened up by history to a mixture of races and cultures, is being seen as providing an opportunity to advance specific cultural and social values.

On this point, local participants in the seminar were unanimous. Furthermore, Campania is at present a «test zone» of extreme interest, a region for experiment benefiting from a mixture of cultures and societies that until recently was unforeseeable in Europe. This region, economically weak and strongly attached to its traditions, is in the process of becoming a unique cultural melting pot, made up of a stable indigenous population, indigenous emigrants returning from experience of different civilisations, and immigrants from the third world.

It is indispensable that the European institutions with cultural and educational jurisdiction should follow its evolution closely and, in particular, provide intensive educational assistance as urgently requested by teachers in the region, for the pilot experiment taking place in its schools.

b. In practical terms, the mediating role of returning migrant women (recognised as essential by participants) might be exploited through a process of socialisation, putting them into active contact - eg by means of associations promoted by local authorities or by the European institutions - with other women (returning emigrant women, immigrants, the stable indigenous population, foreign wives of migrants). Such an arrangement might also enable them to play an active role in the process of improving the status of women in southern society as a whole whilst benefiting the social and cultural level of the community (injection of innovatory ideas and practices into daily social life, a sphere in which southern women have become particularly competent).

c. Another specific area considered extremely useful by participants is contestably that of exchanges between young people from different countries and visits abroad by classes, particularly to countries which receive substantial communities of immigrants. In this area too, stimulation by the European institutions seems indispensable. Furthermore, schools, communes (and, why not?), the provinces might promote the establishment of libraries containing foreign books, to take account of the major foreign cultures brought back by returning migrants, in order to provide them with cultural development and continuity.

d. Lastly, all the teachers severely condemned the host countries for their responsibility regarding the lamentable ignorance of their original language and culture by children of migrants returning to the country. In particular, efforts by the EEC countries, which have committed themselves to providing cultural continuity for the children of migrants, manifestly leave a good deal to be desired. Officials responsible in the host countries must be made aware of the situation, as a matter of urgency.

# A P P E N D I X I

## INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND MIGRANT WOMEN

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

REGION DE LA CAMPANIE - ASSESSORATO ALLA CULTURA (Département de la culture)

REGION DE LA CAMPANIE - ASSESSORATO AL LAVORO A ALL'EMIGRAZIONE
(Département du travail et de l'émigration)

CONSULTA REGIONALE DELLA CAMPANIA PER L'EMIGRAZIONE
Conseil régional de la Campanie pour l'émigration

AMMINISTRAZIONE PROVINCIALE DI CASERTA
Administration principale de Caserta

AMMINISTRAZIONE COMMUNALE DI CASERTA
Administration de la ville de Caserta

ENTE PROVINCIALE PER IL TURISMO
Office du tourisme de la province de Caserta

Conseil de l'Europe :

Mme Micheline REY, chargée de mission à l'Accueil et l'éducation des migrants, Département de l'Instruction Publique, Genève ; Président du Groupe de travail du CDCC chargé de l'éducation de migrants : "La formation des enseignants"

M. Antonio PEROTTI, Directeur du Centre d'information et d'études sur les migrations internationales, Paris ; membre du Groupe de Projet n° 7 du CDCC sur "L'éducation et le développement culturel des migrants"

Mme Maria Ausilia CERRI, Directeur des questions pédagogiques et didactiques auprès du Consulat d'Italie à Metz (France)

Organismes publics

Istituto "F. SANTI" per l'Emigrazione
Dott.ssa PESCIA Carla
Prof. DE LUCIA Felice

A.E.D.E.
Prof. Sossietta VITALE

A.N.F.E.
Prof. Antonio DE MARTINO
Prof. Teresa LIETO

I.R.R.S.A.E.
Prof.ssa Alfonsina NATALE

S.I.D.E.F.
Prof. Anna SCHIAVO

C.G.I.L. )
C.I.S.L. ) Prof. Gaetano PALAIA
U.I.L. )

Associations

UFFICIO SCOLASTICO REGIONALE DELLA CAMPANIA

1. Dr AMATO Guglielmo

PROVVEDITORATO AGLI STUDI DI AVELLINO

1.Dott. CERRETA Mario
2. " VIETRI Nicola
3. " GIANNELLI Serafino
4. " PEDICINI Norma

PROVVEDITORATO AGLI STUDI DI BENEVENTO

1.Dott. ADDONIZIO Gaetanino
2. " PILLA Luisa
3. " SENECO Elena
4. " ZANIN Domenica

PROVVEDITORATO AGLI STUDI DI NAPOLI

1.Dott. MINUTOLO Mario
2. " ALBIN Maria
3. " VITAGLIANO Antonio

PROVVEDITORATO AGLI STUDI DI SALERNO

1.Dott. MINALO LOBASCIO Elvira
2. " ORLANDO Eligio
3. " LACOVELLI PARENTE Raffaella
4. " CALABRESE Maria Cesarea

Enseignants et chefs d'Etablissements de la province de Caserta

Prof. BELLUCCI Andrea - Scuola Media VAIRANO
" BILLET Giovanna - D.D. 2° CASERTA
" CAIVANO Gaetana - Scuola M. PONTELATONE
" CAPECE Teresa - Scuola M. CARINARO
" CAVALIERE Vincenzina - D.D. MIGNANO M.L.
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" DE SISTO Antonio - Scuola M. S. ANGELO
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" DI RIENZO Marisa - I.T.C. PAVESE CASERTA
" FARAONE Giuseppe - I.T.C. PIEDIMONTE M.
" FERRAJUOLO Amalia - Liceo Scientifico Caserta
" HELZEL Letizia - I.T.G. CASERTA
" IANNELLI Adriana - D.D. 5° CASERTA
" IANNITTI Lina - I.T.C. PIEDIMONTE M.
" IOVINO Domenico - I.T.C. "MATTEI" CASERTA
" LAVIERI Vito - SCUOLA M.S. ARPINO
" MAGRI Maria - I.P.S.I.A. VAINANO

Prof. PARISI Maria - Scuola M. VITULAZIO
" PITOCCO Alba - I.T.C. "PAVESE" CASERTA
" RIELLO Liliana - Scuola M. MIGNANO M.L.
" RIENZO Pasquale - Scuola M. "MAZZOCCHI" S. MARIA C.V.
" RUSSO Arturo - D.D. 2° CASERTA
" SGAMBATO Carmine - Scuola M. S. MARIA C.V.
" SORGENTE Gennaro - Scuola M. "Vitale" PIEDIMONTE M.
" SORGENTE Giuseppe - Scuola M. "Alighieri" CASERTA
" STENDARDO Lucia - D.D. 3° MONDRAGONE
" TRIVELLA Romolo - D.D. 2° MONDRAGONE
" GIUGNO Antonio - IST. MAG. CAPUA
" LANDOLFI Corrado - I.T.I.S. CAPUA
" ARICO' M. Giovanna - I.T.C. S. MARIA C.V.
" MARZAIOLI Michele - Lic. Sc. AVERSA
" FIORELLA Carmela - I.T.C. CASERTA